

# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE United States Patent and Trademark Office Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.	
10/772,977	02/05/2004	Jeffrey L. Young	10872.0148.D	5187	
23369 75	90 06/30/2004		EXAM	EXAMINER	
HOWREY SIN	MON ARNOLD & WH	HEWITT, JAMES M			
750 BERING D HOUSTON, TX			ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER		
			3679		
			DATE MAILED: 06/30/2004		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)	. /
Office Aution Comment	10/772,977	YOUNG ET AL.	40
Office Action Summary	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James M Hewitt	3679	
The MAILING DATE of this communication ap Period for Reply	pears on the cover sheet wi	th the correspondence add	lress
A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPL THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.  - Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1. after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.  - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a replication of the period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statut Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).	136(a). In no event, however, may a reply within the statutory minimum of thirt will apply and will expire SIX (6) MON e. cause the application to become AB	eply be timely filed  (30) days will be considered timely.  THS from the mailing date of this cor  ANDONED (35 U.S.C. 8 133)	nrnunication.
Status			
1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on  2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) Thi  3) Since this application is in condition for allowated closed in accordance with the practice under	s action is non-final. ance except for formal matte	•	merits is
Disposition of Claims			
4)  Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application 4a) Of the above claim(s) is/are withdra 5)  Claim(s) is/are allowed. 6)  Claim(s) 1-6,8-15,17-19 and 21 is/are rejected 7)  Claim(s) 7,16 and 20 is/are objected to. 8)  Claim(s) are subject to restriction and/o	awn from consideration.		
Application Papers			
9) The specification is objected to by the Examina  10) The drawing(s) filed on 2/5/04 is/are: a) accomposed and applicant may not request that any objection to the Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correct 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the E	cepted or b) $\boxtimes$ objected to be drawing(s) be held in abeyant cition is required if the drawing(	ce. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). s) is objected to. See 37 CFF	
Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119			
12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign a) All b) Some * c) None of:  1. Certified copies of the priority documen 2. Certified copies of the priority documen 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documen application from the International Burea * See the attached detailed Office action for a list	ts have been received. ts have been received in Apority documents have been ou (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).	oplication No received in this National S	stage
Attachment(s)  1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date  U.S. Patent and Trademark Office	Paper No(s		
PTOL-326 (Rev. 1-04) Office A	ction Summary	Part of Paper No./Mail Date	e 06232004

A. . . F. M. America St. 12 .

Art Unit: 3679

#### **DETAILED ACTION**

## **Priority**

Applicant has not complied with one or more conditions for receiving the benefit of an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 120 as follows:

An application in which the benefits of an earlier application are desired must contain a specific reference to the prior application(s) in the first sentence of the specification or in an application data sheet (37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) and (a)(5)). The specific reference to any prior nonprovisional application must include the relationship (i.e., continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part) between the applications except when the reference is to a prior application of a CPA assigned the same application number.

Reference should be made to application 10/085,176, filed 2/27/02, now U.S. Patent No. 6,702,332. Also, as applications 09/422,480 and 09/141,545 have issued to patent, their respective patent numbers should be recited.

### **Drawings**

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the embodiment described in claims 5-7 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Application/Control Number: 10/772,977 Page 3

Art Unit: 3679

Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

### Specification

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: The embodiment described in claims 5-7 should be described in the specification. Care should be made not to introduce any new matter.

Art Unit: 3679

## **Double Patenting**

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 2 respectively of U.S. Patent No. 6,702,332. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims differ only by claims 1 and 2 requiring the hose receptacle to be friction-based, and the hose receptable to be converted to a locking hose receptacle when the adapter first end is attached to the hose receptacle. These different limitations are considered inherent to the invention of claims 15 and 16.

# Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-11, 13-15, 17-19 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Keane (US 4,618,195).

With respect to claim 1 and with particular reference to Figure 3, Keane discloses an adapter (14) for connecting a hose to a hose receptacle of an object in a locking relationship, the adapter comprising: a first end adapted to be fixedly attached to one of the hose receptacle or the hose; and a second end having a first locking element adapted to selectively engage a second locking element to establish a locking relationship.

The first and second locking elements being either the rib on the adapter that engages a given corrugation on the hose and the corrugation, respectively, or the tab (28) and recess (26) respectively, or the projecting terminals (28) and female terminals (33) respectively.

With respect to claim 2, wherein the first end (30) is adapted to be fixedly attached to the hose receptacle.

With respect to claim 3, wherein the second locking element (a given corrugation) is attached to the hose, such that the hose is selectively connectable to the second end of the adapter in a locking relationship.

With respect to claim 5, wherein the first end (that end opposite 30) is adapted to be fixedly attached to the hose.

With respect to claim 6, wherein the second locking element (26) is attached to the hose receptacle, such that the second end of the adapter is selectively connectable to the hose receptacle in a locking relationship.

With respect to claim 8, wherein the first locking element (27) includes a post for interlocking with the second locking element. Given the broadest reasonable interpretation, the boss (27) has been interpreted as the claimed post.

With respect to claim 9, wherein the first locking element includes a generally U-shaped casing (45, the leftmost numeral 45 in Figure 3).

With respect to claim 10, wherein the first locking element includes a post (32) traversing the U-shaped casing for interlocking with the second locking element (33).

With respect to claim 11, a hose system for a vacuum appliance having a hose receptacle, the hose system comprising: a hose having a connection end; a first locking element connected to the connection end of the hose; and an adapter having first and second ends, the first end adapted to be fixedly attached to the hose receptacle, the

Art Unit: 3679

second end having a second locking element adapted to selectively engage the first locking element.

For claim 13, the first locking element has been interpreted as a given hose corrugation, the adapter has been interpreted as (14), and the second locking element has been interpreted as that rib on the adapter that engages a given corrugation on the hose.

For claims 14-15 and 17-19, the connection end of the hose has been interpreted as (14), the adapter has been interpreted as (21), it being fixed or integral with the hose receptacle (15), the first and second locking elements have been interpreted as (45, the leftmost numeral 45 in Figure 3), including terminals (32), and (45, rightmost numeral 45 in Figure 3), including terminals (33), respectively.

With respect to claim 13, wherein the second locking element includes a post (rib) for interlocking with the first locking element. Given the broadest reasonable interpretation, the boss (27) has been interpreted as the claimed post.

With respect to claim 14, wherein the second locking element includes a generally U-shaped casing (rightmost 45).

With respect to claim 15, wherein the second locking element includes a post (one of terminals 33) traversing the U-shaped casing for interlocking with the first locking element.

With respect to claim 17, wherein the first locking element includes a post (32) for interlocking with the second locking element.

With respect to claim 18, wherein the first locking element includes a generally U-shaped casing (rightmost 45).

With respect to claim 19, wherein the first locking element includes a post (32) traversing the U-shaped casing for interlocking the second locking element.

With respect to claim 21, a hose system for a vacuum appliance having a hose receptacle, the hose system comprising: a hose having a connection end; a first locking element (a given corrugation) connected to the connection end of the hose; an adapter (14) having a second locking element (rib that engages a given corrugation) adapted to selectively engage the first locking element; and means (26 and 27) for fixedly attaching the adapter to the hose receptacle.

# Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 3679

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-6 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berfield (US 5,408,722) in view of Keane (US 4,618,195).

Berfield discloses a hose connector that attaches to the inlet (hose receptacle) of a vacuum cleaner. The end of Berfield's connector includes flaps (78, 80) that extend outwardly therefrom, the flaps adapted to engage the hose receptacle (see Figure 6). Berfield's connector end is essentially an adapter that is formed in one piece with the hose (16). Keane teaches an adapter that at one end connects to a vacuum cleaner inlet and at the other attaches to a hose. In view of Keane's teaching, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form Berfield's connector end and hose as two separate pieces, since it has been held that constructing a formerly integral structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art. *Nerwin v. Erlichman*, 168 USPQ 177, 179.

With respect to claim 1, Berfield as modified by Keane discloses an adapter (14) for connecting a hose (16) to a hose receptacle (tank opening) of an object in a locking relationship, the adapter comprising: a first end adapted to be fixedly attached to one of the hose receptacle or the hose; and a second end having a first locking element adapted to selectively engage a second locking element to establish a locking relationship.

With respect to claim 2, wherein the first end is adapted to be fixedly attached to the hose receptacle.

With respect to claim 3, wherein the second locking element (a given corrugation) is attached to the hose, such that the hose is selectively connectable to the second end of the adapter in a locking relationship.

With respect to claim 4, wherein the first end of the adapter includes a plurality of flaps (78, 80) extending outwardly therefrom, the flaps adapted to engage the hose receptacle to fixedly attach the first end to the hose receptacle.

With respect to claim 5, wherein the first end is adapted to be fixedly attached to the hose.

Art Unit: 3679

With respect to claim 6, wherein the second locking element (36) is attached to

the hose receptacle, such that the second end of the adapter is selectively connectable

to the hose receptacle in a locking relationship.

With respect to claim 11, Berfield as modified by Keane discloses a hose system

for a vacuum appliance having a hose receptacle, the hose system comprising a hose

having a connection end; a first locking element (a given corrugation) connected to the

connection end of the hose; and an adapter having first and second ends, the first end

adapted to be fixedly attached to the hose receptacle, the second end having a second

locking element (rib, in Keane, that engages a given corrugation) adapted to selectively

engage the first locking element.

With respect to claim 12, wherein the first end of the adapter includes a plurality

of flaps (78, 80) extending outwardly therefrom, the flaps adapted to engage the hose

receptacle to fixedly attach the first end to the receptacle.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7, 16 and 20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base

claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the

limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Page 11

#### Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James M Hewitt whose telephone number is 703-305-0552. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 930am-600pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel Stodola can be reached on 703-308-2686. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

James M. Hewitt

Patent Examiner

Technology Center 3600